

FACULTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPLICATION
Fall 2016

Name of Person Submitting Request:		Marty Milligan
Program or Service Area:		Disabled Student Programs and Services
Division:		Student Services
Date of Last Program Efficacy:		March 30, 2016
What rating was given?		Continuation
# of FT faculty 1	# of Adjuncts 3	1.175 Faculty Load (per semester):
Position Requested:		DSPS Counselor
Strategic Initiatives Addressed:(See http://www.valleycollege.edu/about-sbvc/office-of-president/college_planning_documents/documents/strategic-plan-report-working-doc-8-25-15-2.pdf)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access 2. Success

1. Provide a rationale for your request. (Explain, in detail, the need for this position.)

DSPS is requesting a full-time DSPS counselor to be paid for through general funds. The rationale for this request is as follows:

From fiscal year 2013-2014 to fiscal year 2015-2016, the annual unduplicated count of students served by DSPS at SBVC **increased by 50%, from 758 to 1141** (see <http://datamart.ccco.edu/Services/DSPS>). Recent changes to Title 5 remove barriers to verifying a disabling condition, resulting in even more eligible students seeking services. The anticipated student growth of 2 to 4% at SBVC will further add to the number of students seeking services from DSPS. Unfortunately, DSPS currently has only 3 adjunct counselors whose collective time on campus of 46 hours per week cannot effectively meet the needs of the growing number of students DSPS serves. Further, the 3 DSPS adjunct counselors are in part paid for with SSSP funds. These **funds are not guaranteed** on a yearly basis which potentially jeopardizes their continued employment. Therefore, a substantial gap exists between the number of students needing access to a DSPS counselor and the assured availability of DSPS counselors to serve them.

As you will read in our response to question 3 below, paying for a full-time DSPS counselor through general funds will actually result in an **increase** in the annual allocation of categorical funds that DSPS receives from the state chancellor's office. This enhancement in allocation of categorical funds through **college effort** (i.e., funding DSPS positions with general fund dollars) is unique to DSPS. No other Student Services program incentivizes the use of general fund dollars in this manner.

In accordance with the Student Success Act, all students must be provided with core services including counseling, advising and development of education plans in order to increase their chance of successfully meeting their educational goals. **DSPS counselors must also perform duties specific to the students' disabilities.** Prior to meeting with students, DSPS counselors read through students' disability documentation, including medical records, neuro-psychological reports, psychoeducational evaluations, individual educational plans, and learning disabilities documentation to determine the students' eligibility for services. In addition to providing the

aforementioned core services, DSPS counselors also must take a student's disability into account. A significant portion of the advising appointment is spent discussing the student's disability, its impact in the educational environment, appropriate mandated academic accommodations, how to obtain these accommodations from the DSPS Office, how to communicate the need for accommodations with professors, and completing forms to expedite these processes. DSPS counselors provide disability management counseling and work with students to tailor their education plans to meet their specific needs related to their disabilities. The DSPS Office often refers students to community services, including California Department of Rehabilitation, Inland Regional Center, and Rolling Start, and serves as a liaison with these organizations for students. Additionally, as the DSPS Office maintains students' confidential documentation in physical files, counselors must make file notes following each student interaction. **In short, providing services to students with disabilities is both specialized and time consuming.** Initial counseling appointments typically take at least one hour and follow-up appointments are minimally one-half hour in length. Provision of counseling to DSPS students is not discretionary; all DSPS students must meet with a DSPS counselor on regular basis per the California Community College Chancellor's Office's interpretation of Title 5. Having such a limited counselor-student ratio presents challenges to prompt delivery of core services. Not only does this conflict with the goals of the Student Success Act, but it also potentially violates federal mandates and state regulations by not providing students with accommodations in a timely manner. Funding a full-time DSPS counselor is the best way to ensure that students have access to the resources that they need in order to fulfill DSPS program requirements and meet the needs of the students.

While students served by DSPS can obtain core services from the general counseling office, doing so is typically not in the students' best interests and cannot be construed as the best use of institutional resources. It is preferred by both DSPS and the general counseling office that core services for these students be provided by a DSPS counselor who has access to the students' disability documentation, possesses expertise in the impact of disabilities on academic achievement, and can effectively work with these students in completing their education goals.

2. Indicate how the content of the department/program's latest Efficacy Report and/or current EMP supports this request and how the request is tied to program planning. (*Directly reference the relevant information from your latest Efficacy Report and/or current EMP in your discussion.*)

The DSPS Spring 2016 Efficacy Report supports this request. Specifically, the Efficacy Report notes the need for a full-time DSPS counselor is one of the two major challenges for DSPS, particularly against the backdrop of the significantly increasing number of students seeking services. The current DSPS Annual Plan specifically states that additional funding is needed in order to hire a full-time DSPS counselor. It notes that hiring a full-time DSPS counselor will allow for expanded assessment and counseling services, more efficient review of documentation to verify students' reported disabilities, and the delivery of core services including the completion of comprehensive Student Education Plans in order to obtain maximum funding as stated in the Student Success Act. In alignment with one of the college's Strategic Goals of Student Success, one of the DSPS program goals is to increase the number of students receiving advisement, educational counseling, and educational planning in a timely manner. The addition of a full-time counselor will ensure that students served by DSPS will receive core matriculation services including counseling, advising, and development of education plans which as mandated by the Student Success Act.

3. Indicate any additional information you want the committee to consider (*for example, course fill rates, regulatory information, compliance, updated efficiency, student success data, planning, etc.*).

The annual allocation that DSPS receives from the state chancellor's office is based on a formula that includes two components. One of these components is the college's "weighted student count" (i.e., the number of students in each "weighted" disability category). Weighting is based on the relative costs of providing services to each of the disability categories. For example, students served under the deaf/hard-of-hearing category have a higher weighting than students served under the mobility category because the costs associated with providing services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students is much higher than the costs associated with providing services to students with mobility disabilities. Currently, the portion of the allocation calculated by the weighted student count is 90 percent.

The second component included in the formula is **college effort**. College effort is calculated as a proportion of the total amount of general funds that the college contributes to DSPS divided by the college's total DSPS budget. Currently, the portion of the allocation calculated by college effort is 10 percent. **Because college effort is included in the allocation formula, any additional contribution from the general fund to DSPS is incentivized because it actually increases the DSPS allocation.** Further, this incentive will increase starting fiscal year 2018-19. That is, starting in 2018-19, the formula increases the percent of state DSPS funds that are calculated based on college effort from 10 percent of the state DSPS appropriation to 20 percent. Consequently, the portion of the allocation calculated by the weighted student count will be reduced from 90 percent to 80 percent. This formula change was made to encourage general fund contributions to DSPS. That is, colleges who contribute more general fund to DSPS will see a greater return in their DSPS allocation. **This mandate is unique to DSPS (i.e. greater college effort results in greater allocation of categorical funds received by DSPS from the state chancellor's office).** In summary, funding our request for a full-time DSPS counselor through general funds would be construed as college effort and would result in an increase in the annual allocation received by DSPS. The additional funds allocated to DSPS will allow for the purchase of smart pens and additional technology which are auxiliary aids that ultimately foster students' retention, success and independence.

This request for a full-time DSPS counselor is supported by data from the 2014 Report on Disabled Student Programs and Services. Specifically, data from this report indicate that students served by DSPS in 2011-12 and 2012-13 were 12.0 and 12.2 percent respectively, more likely to retain their enrollment from fall to spring than other students. The data reveal that, given appropriate support services and specialized counseling, students with disabilities remain enrolled and persist in their studies in community college throughout the academic year. As mentioned above, the needs of the growing number of DSPS students exceeds the collective number of hours that adjunct DSPS counselors are available to serve them. A full-time DSPS counselor will help meet the needs of these students.

A full-time DSPS counselor will provide a presence within the DSPS office. Students will have a faculty member to whom they can go on a regular basis rather than hope that an adjunct counselor is available. Therefore, a full-time counselor will be able to provide a continuity of services to students. Further, a full-time counselor will be in the position to cultivate relationships within Student Services and with instructional faculty for the benefit of DSPS students. This will foster student retention and success. Lastly, the addition of a full time DSPS

counselor will increase DSPTS involvement in shared governance. Given that the number of students that are served by DSPTS is increasing, the participation of additional DSPTS faculty on college committees will ensure adequate representation.

The exclusive use of adjunct counselors within DSPTS is not in the best interests of meeting students' needs. First, the 3 DSPTS adjunct counselors are in part paid for with SSSP funds. These funds are not guaranteed on a yearly basis which potentially jeopardizes their continued employment. Second, these counselors typically divide their time between SBVC and other campuses, and are often seeking full-time employment elsewhere. Thirdly, finding a counselor qualified to serve in DSPTS is challenging given the specialized training, education, and experience that is required.

4. What are the consequences of not filling this position?

DSPTS is a complicated program and poses unique legal risks to SBVC in terms of Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 complaints, or worse, litigation. The absence of a full-time DSPTS counselor may jeopardize the timely delivery of specialized counseling services to students with disabilities. Should a student submit a complaint to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the potential cost to the college could be exorbitant. Once the OCR starts to investigate a student's complaint, its review will likely extend beyond the scope of the initial complaint. In fact, it could extend to all areas of operation and would require the commitment of extensive financial resources and personnel. Litigation, regardless of whether SBVC has committed an error, would come at a substantial cost. The above is not intended to disquiet the committee members, but to provide some perspective as to the special requirements imposed on DSPTS and how the addition of a full-time DSPTS counselor could avert potential litigation.